

FREE!

# PCGzine

Issue 40 | April 2010

Free Magazine For PC Gamers. Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...

PREVIEW!

## STARCRAFT II: WINGS OF LIBERTY

Exclusive interview and preview of 2010's hottest RTS

REVIEWED!



### JUST CAUSE 2

A tropical paradise worth visiting?

PREVIEWED!

### F1 2010

Formula One finally returns to the PC



FIRST LOOK!



### DISCIPLES III



### TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED 2

REVIEWED!



### COMMAND & CONQUER 4

REVIEWED!



### MUD TV

PREVIEWED!



### SPLIT/SECOND

REVIEWED!



### PRISON BREAK



# Welcome to PCGZine



Critics of the PC as a gaming platform will say that it's only good for RPGs and first-person shooters, but the proof against that feeble argument is contained within these pages.

Split/Second and F1 2010 are two driving games that are looking absolutely stunning, as is the visually amazing and hugely playable Just Cause 2. Then, if you do want the finest slice of RTS gaming around, then that's catered for with both new Command & Conquer and StarCraft II.

With a pedigree like that, it just goes to show that if you want the best games platform out there, then it has to be PC.

**READER FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of the magazine!

Enjoy the issue.

**Dan Hutchinson, Editor**  
pcgzine@gamerzines.com

## MEET THE TEAM

Probably the best games writers on the planet

**Andy Griffiths**  
Andy thinks that StarCraft II could be stunning. And we think he's right.

**David Scammell**  
When we asked David why he liked Just Cause 2, he said 'Just cause I do'. Sigh...

**Jon Denton**  
Jon spent a week in a cell with a man called Bubba for Prison Break. Method gamers, eh.

## Don't miss! This month's highlights...

**StarCraft II**  
The biggest and baddest RTS is returning! Exclusive interview and preview inside...

**Just Cause 2**  
Did we fall for this return to island life?

**Brink**

**F1 2010**

**Split/Second**

**Prison Break**

**Command & Conquer 4**

| QUICK FINDER                    |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Every game's just a click away! |                        |
| Split/Second                    | Just Cause 2           |
| Disciples III                   | Command & Conquer 4    |
| Test Drive Unlimited 2          | Prison Break           |
| Brink                           | MUD TV                 |
| StarCraft II                    | Dragon Age: Awakenings |
| F1 2010                         |                        |

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# AION



PLAYBACK OPTIONS: ENHANCED

A WORLD DIVIDED. A JOURNEY UNCHARTED.

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## SPLIT/SECOND

**Publisher:** Disney

Interactive

**Developer:** Black

Rock Studio

**Heritage:** Pure

**Link:** <http://disney.go.com/disneyinteractivestudios/splitsecond>

splitsecond

ETA: May

### PREVIEW FEEDBACK!

Click here to tell us what you think of Split/Second



Trust us, you've never seen a driving game quite like this one.

# Split/Second

FIRST LOOK

*Don't just race on a track, change it!*

### What's the story?

Arcade racers don't get more ambitious than this, and seeing as the genre hasn't had many recently, a great deal of anticipation surrounds this cataclysmic title. Split/Second flips the standard driving model on its head by allowing drivers to completely change their surroundings by strategically placed charges, culminating in a race experience which evolves every lap. It's a tall order to be sure, but when you see the game in action then it's impossible not to be impressed with this revolutionary direction.

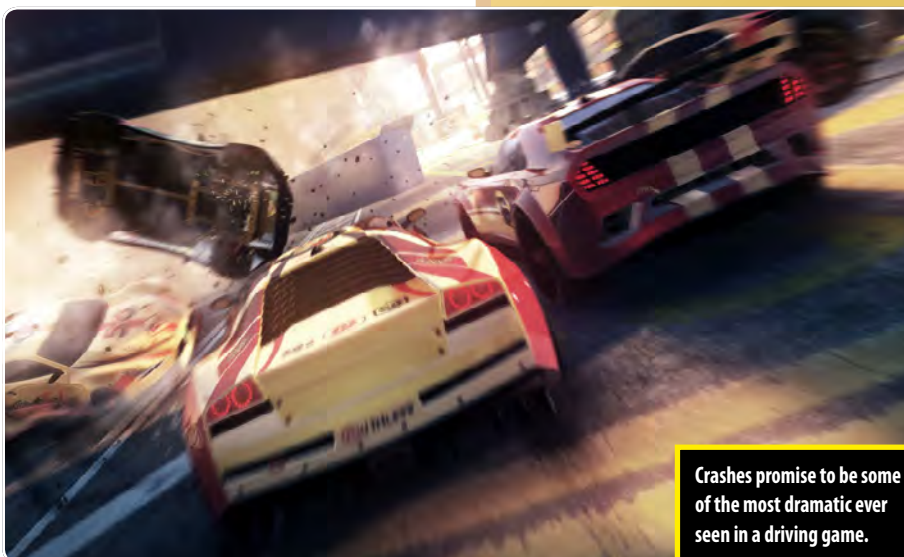
### What do we know?

The explosive track deforming action is excused by the game's plot which places racers at the centre of a multi-million pound reality TV show, where racers can lay waste to entire environments in pursuit of that illusive win. Don't worry too much though, as the realistic settings – influenced by the likes of Seattle and Yokohama docks – are only elaborate sets, so no civilians get injured in the racing. Players earn points in the races to utilise the environmental attacks by drifting round corners, hitting other cars and generally driving recklessly.

### Anything else to declare?

The closest thing PC gamers have had to car combat recently was last year's excellent Burnout Paradise. Black Rock want to inherit Criterion's accolade as the best producer of arcade racers, and with Split/Second's epic set pieces, we have immensely high hopes. Why simply overtake a racer when you squash him flat with a destabilised skyscraper, or a handily placed ship container? Sounds good to us.

Crashes promise to be some of the most dramatic ever seen in a driving game.



# WHY JUST RACE THE TRACK...



# WHEN YOU CAN CHANGE IT!

RELEASE I-BEAM

the best of E3  
**GAME  
CRITICS  
AWARD**  
09 WINNER

BEST RACING GAME



PLAYBACK OPTIONS: ENHANCED

TRIGGER  
DROP PAYLOAD

VIDEO 1

VIDEO 2



## PRE-ORDER NOW



[WWW.SPLITSECONDVELOCITY.CO.UK](http://WWW.SPLITSECONDVELOCITY.CO.UK)

# SPLIT/SECOND VELOCITY

"DISNEY DELIVERS THE MOST EXPLOSIVE RACING GAME YET" - GAMES™

## 21.05.10



PS3  
PlayStation 3



XBOX 360

XBOX LIVE



www.pegi.info

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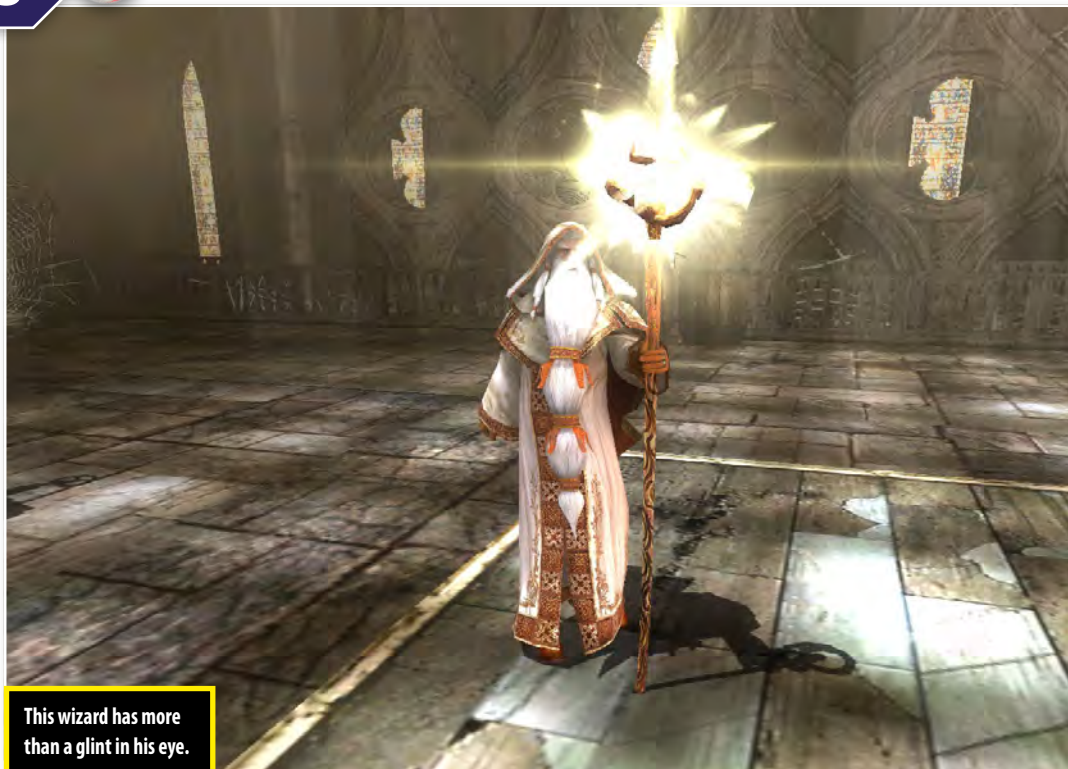


Next Page



**Publisher:** Kalypso Media  
**Developer:** Akella  
**Link:** <http://en.akella.com/Game.aspx?id=28>  
**ETA:** Summer

**PREVIEW  
FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to  
tell us what  
you think of  
Disciples III



This wizard has more  
than a glint in his eye.

Evil forces struggle  
to keep a low profile.



Expect plenty of statistics  
to get engrossed in.

# Disciples III: Renaissance

*Swords, chivalry and strategy*

## What's the story?

This medieval mash-up between real-time strategy game and RPG has been lost in the wilderness for a while now, but thankfully some new screens and information have surfaced. Featuring a new publisher and a new developer, Disciples III will feature the same hardcore strategy the series is known for, but with a major graphical overhaul. Unlike other strategy titles, the action is turn-based allowing for slower yet more precise control over your units.

## What do we know?

Three different playable races will be on offer, including The Empire, Legions of the Damned and Elven Alliance, all of which have their own buildings, units and skills. All other details are being kept under wraps at the moment, but expect a dark, engrossing experience supported by a wealth

of fiction. Units can be customised with new armour, weaponry and skills, allowing a greater attachment than the usual cannon fodder that this genre offers.

## Anything else to declare?

The first two games in the series were known for their hardcore attention to detail and a small but loyal fanbase. Akella hope to attract new players and old to the series, so expect a few changes to the established formula. Definitely one to watch.

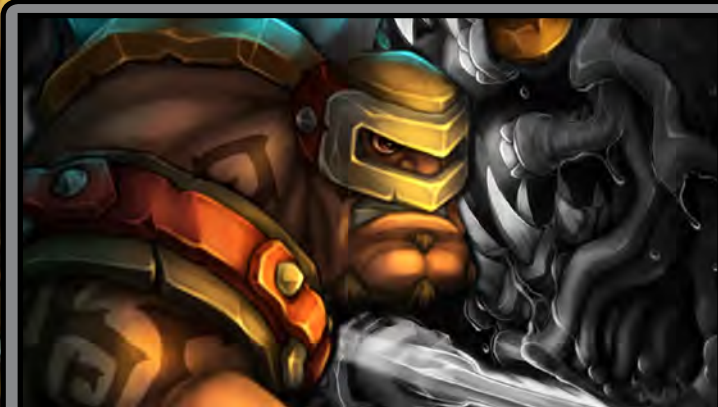
**FIRST  
LOOK**

# TORCHLIGHT



AVAILABLE FROM

GAME  
game.co.uk



PLAYBACK OPTIONS: ENHANCED

## 1UP 94%:

“Even if you aren’t waiting impatiently for Diablo III, Torchlight’s a great value at a mere £20.”

## PC Gamer UK: 89%

“An addictive, attractive, thoughtfully made dungeon crawler.”



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**Publisher:** Atari  
**Developer:** Eden Studios  
**Link:** [www.testdriveunlimited2.com](http://www.testdriveunlimited2.com)  
**ETA:** Autumn

**PREVIEW  
FEEDBACK!**  
 Click here to  
 tell us what  
 you think of  
 Test Drive  
 Unlimited 2



The day/night cycle now includes more subtle variations.

# Test Drive Unlimited 2

**FIRST  
LOOK**

*Whoah! We're going to Ibiza*

## What's the story?

Consumerism isn't something many games try and successfully recreate, but the original Test Drive Unlimited inspired within us more money lust than we thought possible. Winning races, delivering cars and setting fastest times was all in an effort to satisfy our greed for property and ludicrously expensive motors. Thankfully, Eden Studios haven't forgotten those who are obsessed with material gain and they are set to bring back their driving/life simulator once again.

## What do we know?

Hawaii has been ditched this time around for the much racier locale of Ibiza. Unfortunately, the latest news from Atari doesn't mention The Venga Boys or their much sought-after bus, but the final game will feature SUVs and a co-op

mode where the second player will navigate, leaving you to drive on the picturesque island.

## Anything else to declare?

The final version will feature a realistic damage model, dynamic weather and a driving area more than double the size of the original. The revolutionary multiplayer mode will also return, allowing players to join servers seamlessly and run into random racers while racing around the island.

The Viper is sure to pack a lot of horsepower.



As of yet, there's no sign of any neon-clad clubbers.



# A NEW CON, A NEW CONSPIRACY

Play as Tom Paxton, a Company agent sent inside Fox River Penitentiary to observe and report on a prisoner named Michael Scofield. Learn what really happened as your assignment unfolds...



PLAYBACK OPTIONS: ENHANCED

## PRISONBREAK THE CONSPIRACY

OUT NOW

[prisonbreak.deepsilver.com](http://prisonbreak.deepsilver.com)



- Featuring the original cast from the TV show
- Immersive stealth action gameplay
- Interact with and influence the story of season one
- Pick your favourite character and play against a friend in the Fox River underground fight club multiplayer

DEEP SILVER



PS3



XBOX 360

XBOX LIVE



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## BRINK

**Publisher:** Bethesda  
**Developer:** Splash Damage  
**Heritage:** Enemy Territory:  
 Quake Wars  
**Link:** [www.brinkthegame.com](http://www.brinkthegame.com)  
**ETA:** Autumn

**PREVIEW  
FEEDBACK!**  
 Click here to  
 tell us what you  
 think of Brink



The Ark: The city on the water.

# Brink

*This shooter is S.M.A.R.T*

## What's the story?

Mixing parkour with guns sounds like a dangerous combination, but many gamers would expect nothing less from the studio which debuted with a title as impressive as Quake Wars. It has been three long years since then, but Splash Damage are crafting something which looks to revolutionise the first-person shooter landscape.

## What do we know?

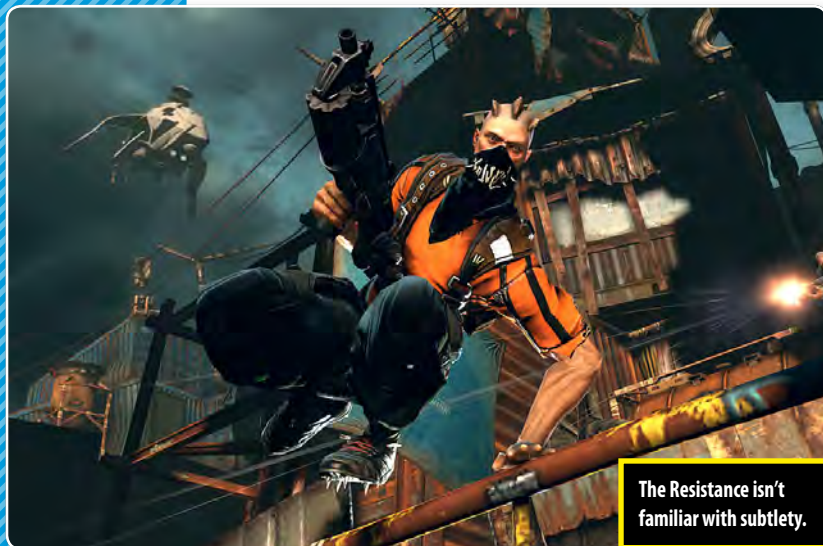
Brink is set on a utopian city called The Ark, where two opposing factions named Security and Resistance are forced to fight for supremacy after the world has experienced cataclysmic flooding. The city looks clean and crisp, with an art style which isn't quite Borderlands or Mirror's Edge. Where Brink really sets itself apart though, is with its implementation of movement. The environment is set up so that players can navigate it in any way they wish. Using a system dubbed S.M.A.R.T (Smooth Movement Across Random Terrain), players can pull off dramatic jumps, slides, grabs and even wall runs

to get from A to B in style. It's a simple yet effective system governed by where the player is looking, and we're also hoping that it'll completely change the dynamics of multiplayer gunfights.

## Anything else to declare?

Expect there to be a huge multiplayer component which will include a co-op story mode and persistent competitive play. No word on a player limit as of yet, but knowing Splash Damage, it's sure to be substantial.

**FIRST  
LOOK**



The Resistance isn't familiar with subtlety.



Security forces pack plenty of gadgetry.

# SUPREME COMMANDER 2



MARCH 2010



PLAYBACK OPTIONS: ENHANCED



SQUARE ENIX



THE BRAVE WILL FIGHT,  
BUT ONLY HEROES WILL COMMAND

[WWW.SUPREMECOMMANDER2.COM](http://WWW.SUPREMECOMMANDER2.COM)

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# 7UP

*More golden nuggets of gaming glory to come*



## Sam & Max: The Devil's Playhouse

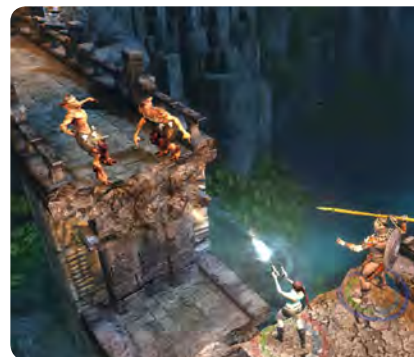
Publisher: Telltale | ETA: TBA

The delightful duo are back and this time they are packing psychic powers. Sounds like Telltale are dialling up the madness for the third season of this classic adventure franchise.

## Lara Croft and the Guardian of Light

Publisher: Square-Enix | ETA: TBA

Apparently the Tomb Raider name was a bit of a burden for this spin-off/reboot, which features co-op and a six-hour campaign. Poor old Ms. Croft has been neglected as of late, so hopefully this budget-priced title is a return to form.



## Monkey Island 2: Special Edition

Publisher: LucasArts | ETA: Autumn

After updating Secret of Monkey Island with new visuals and an updated voice track, it was inevitable to bring back the sequel. Guybrush returns once again, proving you can't keep a loveable pirate down.



## LEGO Universe

Publisher: LEGO | ETA: 2010

Not many franchises inspire more childhood nostalgia than this. The entire MMO has been built for all ages to enable fans to build, create, interact and battle in a world created purely by small novelty building blocks. As long as they have a few homages to Technik we're in! As colourful as it is ambitious.

## Need for Speed World

Publisher: EA | ETA: 2010

Some ideas are so blindingly obvious we wonder why they haven't be tried before. A free-to-play MMO based on a best-selling racing franchise? Why didn't we think of that? Players will be able to race, customise vehicles and initiate police chases involving a plethora of licensed manufacturers.



## FIFA World Cup 2010

Publisher: EA | ETA: April

Save your sceptism, as EA have learnt from the previous tournament-associated debacles with this version, featuring 199 nations and a Scenario mode based on the World Cup's most memorable matches. Maradona's hand of god better not be in there.



## Civilisation V

Publisher: 2K Games | ETA: Autumn

It's time Sid Meier gave us another chance to rule the world. With improved AI, more accurate representations of world leaders and even ranged units, turn-based strategy's biggest franchise is sure to make a big splash in 2010.

SUMMER

RAGE

MAY

R.U.S.E

APRIL

Jumpgate Evolution

GTA: Episodes from Liberty City

Heroes of Newerth

Splinter Cell Conviction

Fallout: New Vega

ON  
THE  
RADAR

Publisher: Blizzard  
 Developer: In-house  
 Link: [www.starcraft2.com](http://www.starcraft2.com)  
 ETA: Summer

# Putting Strategy First

We sit down with Blizzard's Chris Siggat to talk about *StarCraft II: Wings of Liberty*

StarCraft got an entire generation into the RTS genre, packing great visuals and unique gameplay, which was unmatched in 1998. Over 10 years later, fans are now experimenting with the Beta of the sequel, so we caught up with the game's Lead Producer to learn more.

## What kind of lessons have been learnt from the Beta so far?

The Beta is mostly focused on balance and stability. One of the things we are learning is that people are using it as a demo, which has a negative side effect.

It's PvP centric and there's a lot of good players which have been interested in it for a long time. So if people come along that aren't experienced, they are getting into a pool filled with sharks. There's so much more to the game; it's much better than that. We have put a lot of effort into the single-player mode and we're putting the finishing touches to that now.

## The first few games tend to be critical for any player to get online. Will the sharks still be a factor in the final game?

A player doesn't have to be a very good player, he just needs to know more than you. The fact that you don't know how to defend the chokepoint in front of your base because you haven't learnt while playing the campaign can be the difference between getting totally slaughtered and winning the game.

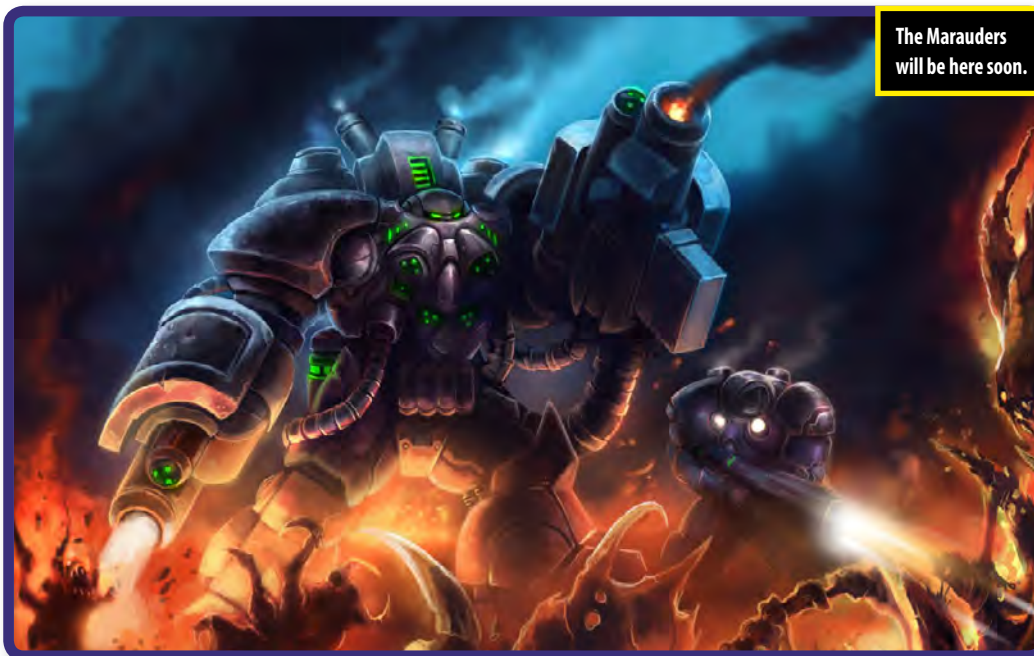
Specifically, we have a whole system that directs players how to



The art style has been faithfully updated.



The Marauders will be here soon.





Battles seem much more dramatic than before.

## > Interview continued

play the game. It starts from the single player – there's the tutorial which steers you towards the challenges, which in turn teaches you lessons you won't find in the campaign. For instance, how many SCV's are needed to resource minerals effectively is not explicitly trained in single player, but we have a challenge that teaches you how to resource more along the lines of what you'll see online. There are a lot of things to get the end user prepared for before they step onto Battle.net.

**The optional fiction is very reminiscent of the MMO side of Blizzard. Was that the inspiration?**

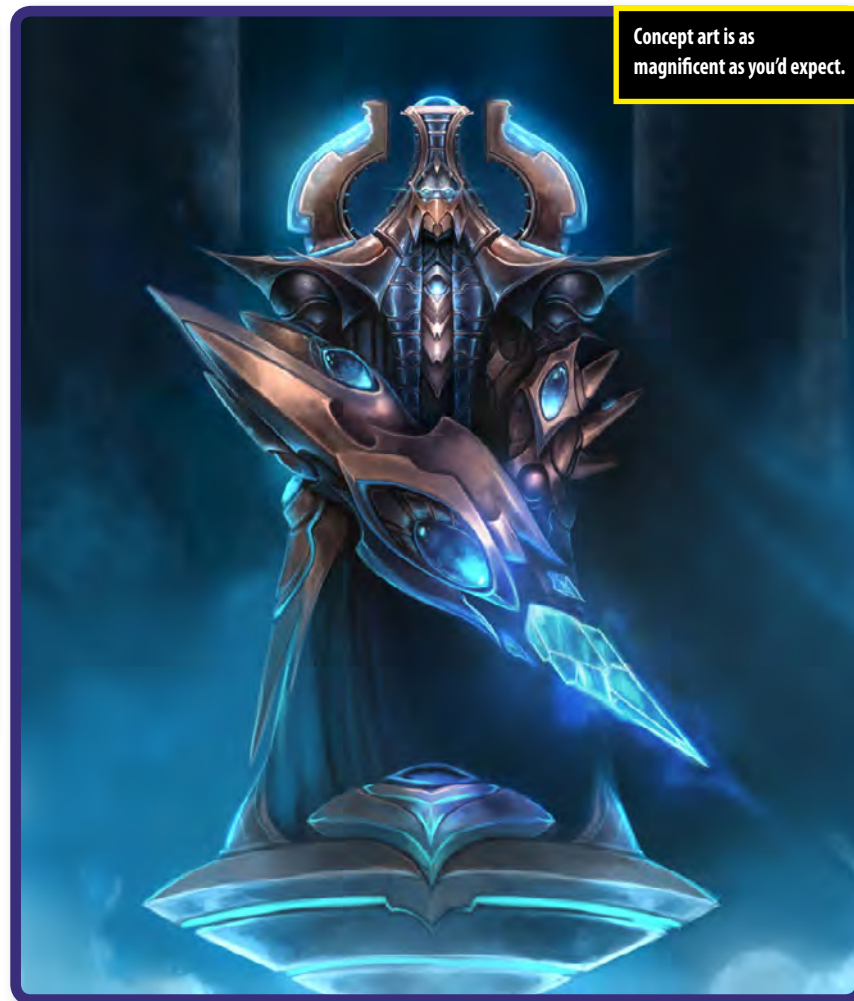
We compare it more to the Wing Commander games of old, where players have the opportunity between missions to explore and find out what's going on. I don't think we really looked to MMO for it; we weren't really looking to that space.

StarCraft had a very well-loved story, and there's a bunch of hardcore fans behind that, as well as plenty of spin-off novels. It speaks to players that really enjoy that, exploring the various nuances that are going on there. For the players that don't want that, they can get on and just play quickly. The old single-player experience involving walls of text is gone! This is all new ground and something I believe the fan base will like a lot.

**Obviously there are plenty of new concepts in StarCraft II. Is the goal to replace the original on people's hard drives?**

Our goal wasn't to replace the original games. What I think people will find is that once people go back to the sequel after playing the original, they'll find little things which are frustrating. There are various gameplay things in the original that once you play StarCraft II and go back to you really notice.

When we set out to make StarCraft II, we consciously hearkened back to the legacy of the original. We knew we wanted there to be a sense of nostalgia. Fans know this world and they knew this game to a certain extent but when they get into dissecting the sequel they will



Concept art is as magnificent as you'd expect.

realise it's very different. The build order they've learned from the original won't work; we're making it different beyond just changing some units. There are around 40% different units dependent on which race you are playing as.

**Needless to say, Battle.net is one of the best online services out there. Do you think fans are too focused on the negatives?**

That's what we want to get away from. People only thought of it as a means to get online and only play PvP but there's so much more to it. Take custom games alone... if you look at Warcraft 3, there are some different mods which are on the level or even more successful than entire games launched by other companies. You really have to go through a lot to get that content, whereas



## > Interview continued

with Battle.net you just go to custom game. Now it's much more integrated, as you are always connected.

### Can you tell us what you think StarCraft II's Galaxy editor will bring to the table?

From my perspective I see even better things coming out of that than the successes of Warcraft 3. We've made a much more powerful editor – it's more daunting I feel – but the people that do this stuff are pretty advanced and can certainly wrap their head around this. It's a lot more data-driven and it gives them more power to do what they want to do.

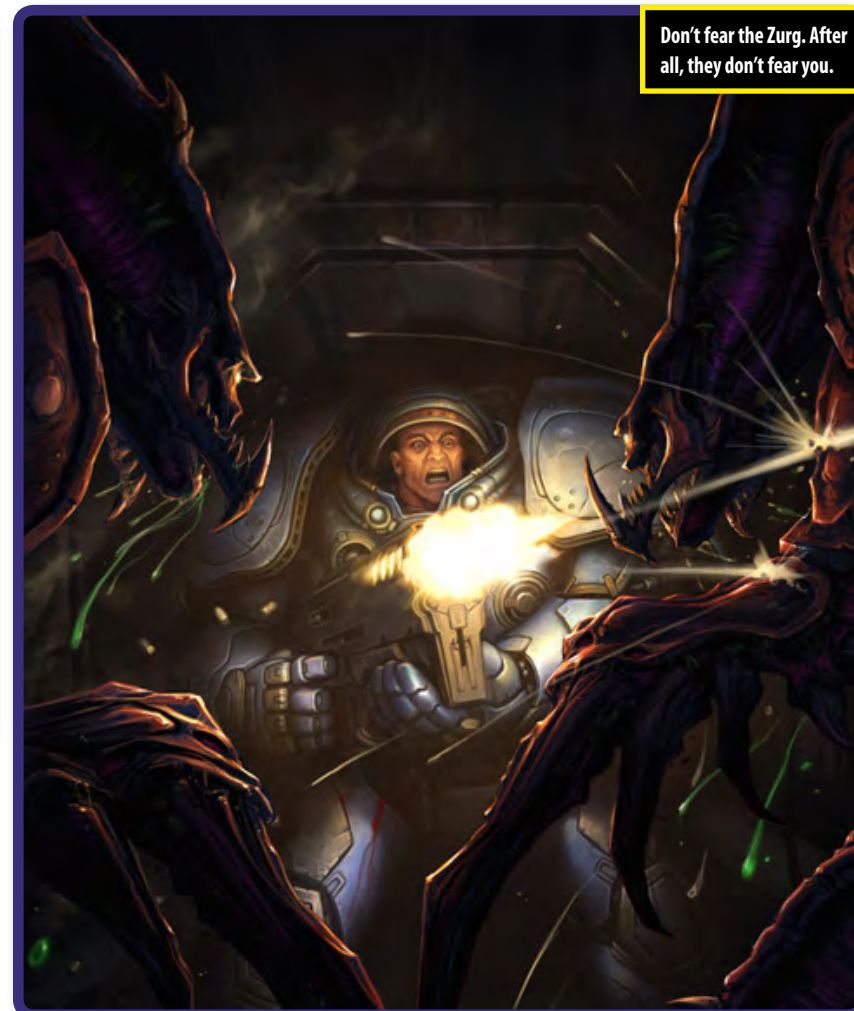
### The original was known for its hardcore reputation. Have you tried to make it more accessible to gamers?

We've done a much better job than our previous games to make it accessible. A lot more training, a lot more familiarisation and more of a sense of progression as you go. Starting with the tutorial, then campaign, challenges, going online playing co-operatively, and finally competitive play, you have more time to discover what it's all about. As for where RTS has gone in general, I think it has gone in many different places. I feel personally that the genre has experimented a lot and some of the basics have gone away. Resourcing is a great example, and

something which is emphasised a lot in SCII, and your skill in that is something you can point to and say: "Well, I'm not a great micro player, but I'm good at managing my base and getting the economy rolling." It may be any attempt to simplify, but it's certainly an attempt to shake things up. When we set out to make StarCraft II, we wanted to capture the things that made the original games so much fun.

### How has e-sports and StarCraft's huge popularity in Korea affected this sequel's development?

It's effected it in a major way, as e-sports are a reality. When we made the original, e-sports didn't really exist – not at the level where we consciously



developed for it. This time around we have; it's something we are passionate about. We do internal tests to try and mimic the competitions out there. We have also invited a bunch of e-sports players from Korea and worldwide to make sure the best of the best are playing the game and offering their comments so we can react to that as well. We'll continue to iterate on it as we go into expansions and beyond. ●

***"When we set out to make StarCraft II, we wanted to capture the things that made the original games so much fun"***

## ◆ HANDS ON

# STARCRAFT II: WINGS OF LIBERTY

*A Zerg rush? You Beta believe it*

**S**tarcraft is to the RTS what Counterstrike is to the online shooter, so it's fair to say that it isn't a place for anyone new to the unique stylings of this strategy sequel. That isn't to say it isn't flawlessly designed, expertly executed and brilliant to watch, but the land of PvP is a harsh, unforgiving landscape.

What else would you expect from the competitive arena which spawned the term e-sports and has dominated Korean gaming culture since its release in 1998? Fans will experience an unmistakable sense of nostalgia when they see the beautifully updated worker units scurrying around to collect resources,

which has a novelty that doesn't wear off even after several hours of play. Economy is as important in this universe as it ever was, and if strategists don't pump out a few low-level infantry units for protection, more experienced players will easily overwhelm them.

Even though the campaign for each of the three races has been split

up and spun off into their own products, players can still take on the role of their favourite faction in multiplayer, whether it be Zurg, Terran or Protoss forces. Each faction has a wealth of different units, with some featuring as many as 40 per cent.

The biggest change from the original is the elimination of the 12 ➤



The battlecruiser is even more deadly with the plasma upgrade.



Line of sight is crucial when engaging enemies.



Chokepoints can be found on every map.

**PREVIEW  
FEEDBACK!**  
Click here to tell us what you think of Starcraft II: Wings of Liberty



## > StarCraft II continued

unit control cap, culminating in masses of units moving around the battlefield at once. It's often awe-inspiring to watch your units swarm into enemy bases, and is a fine example

of how StarCraft II's core concepts have been updated for modern gaming.

The biggest revelation during the Beta we got to grips with is how well Battle.net works, finding appropriately levelled players quickly and without any fuss whatsoever. The lack of LAN

**"It's often awe-inspiring to watch your units swarm over enemy bases"**

support will still annoy some, but for most it's a worthwhile trade off for such a well-implemented service. Whether this will be the case when millions of gamers are unleashed onto the servers at launch remains to be seen.

None of the single-player content has made its way into the Beta, but Blizzard have confirmed that AI skirmishes will be possible before the end of the testing process. It's a shame, because the challenges and tutorials which we haven't yet been shown would be a welcome addition to any newbies to the series – even veterans

may need a refresher of sorts. It would be nice to know more about the campaign at this point, but as always Blizzard are being coy.

If nothing else, the cut-throat nature of this RTS is the kind of PC game that has been lacking for a very long time. We can't wait to see what happens when it's finally released. ●

## THREE OF A KIND

*An introduction to Starcraft II's main factions*



**The Terrans**

**The Zerg**

**The Protoss**

## The Terrans

This race symbolises humanity once the fleshy bipeds have conquered the demands of space. Packing elaborate suits of armour and rudimentary technology, this is the easiest faction to get to terms with. We like bullets... lasers not so much.



PCGZine



HOW COMPLETE?



FIRST IMPRESSIONS?



*Set to dominate servers worldwide all over again*



**Publisher:** Codemasters  
**Developer:** In-house  
**Heritage:** N/A  
**Link:** [www.codemasters.co.uk](http://www.codemasters.co.uk)  
**ETA:** September

## PREVIEW

# F1 2010

*Definitely more than just a license*

Codemasters' driving genre heritage speaks for itself – TOCA, Race Driver, DiRT, GRID – and now their illustrious racing studio is welcoming another discipline into its fraternity, Formula One. They've tried open-wheeled racing before but their latest endeavour is by far the most ambitious. Not content with the license promising all the official data from the 2010 season, the

dev team in Birmingham wants to create an authentic driving experience, both on and off the track.

First things first though, let's get the traditional stuff out of the way. F1 2010 utilises the EGO engine, the same technology which powered GRID, but the open-wheeled action here is much less floaty than its forebear. Handling has been painstakingly researched and tweaked with the

*"The dev team wants to create an authentic driving experience both on and off the track"*

invaluable insights of former British racer Anthony Davidson. His feedback has obviously helped with the development a great deal because as soon as we sampled some of the racing ourselves, we're happy to say that it felt extremely authentic. It's hard to pin down exactly why as we're driving towards Monza's Varienta del Rettifilo at ridiculous speeds but its an accumulation of plenty of factors. Al competitors seem aware of exactly where you are on the track,



The helmet cam seems devastatingly fast.



If you're at the back, prepare to drink a lot of spray.



We call this the 'Michael Bay' filter.

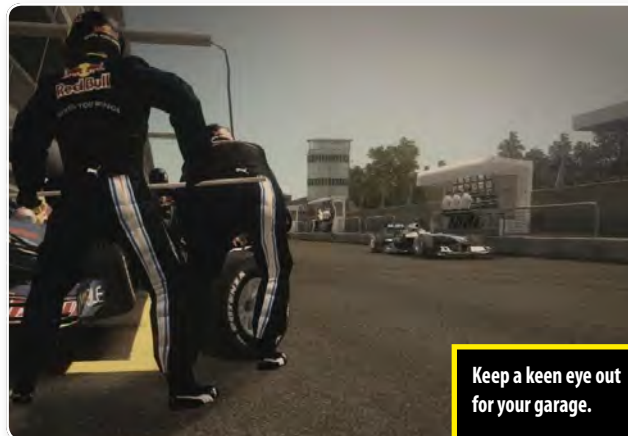


Don't expect the Williams to be upfront for too long.

**PREVIEW FEEDBACK!**  
 Click here to tell us what you think of F1 2010



Codemasters really like the Force India team.



Keep a keen eye out for your garage.

## > F1 2010 continued

defending when necessary and taking advantage of any mistakes.

At the moment, all of the screenshots feature 2009 teams and liveries but come the release, all the appropriate info will be updated to correspond with this season's action.

Tyres are also paid due diligence with simulation-grade degradation

including blistering, flat spotting and marbles off the racing line. Taking care of rubber has become crucial since refuelling is no longer an issue in F1 and, as a result, it has been given the utmost consideration. When in the helmet cam, tyre wear is more than noticeable, with cracks and divots appearing after a few laps of abuse.

All of the arcade pretences have been totally blocked, and no fact

demonstrates this more than a continually evolving track. Yes there's weather but even the amount of rubber on the ground will be accurately represented and factor into lap times.

Ambitious is definitely the best way to sum up this title, and while all the attention paid to the track has been heard in a similar vein before in other so-called driving simulations, it's the off-track coverage which is truly revolutionary. During the multi-season career mode, players will start from the lowest tier teams to progress to the top. R&D, testing, contract negotiations and media interaction will all be under the players control.

Ambition for any licensed title is not something seen very often, but thankfully Codemasters aren't happy



Shards of carbon fibre are sure to fly everywhere.

## THE GRAND PRIX 4 TEST

Why F12010 will surpass the PC's greatest racer



Overtaking

Weather

Pit stops

## Overtaking

Even at pre-alpha, F1 2010 is showing great promise, with AI routines based on drivers' real-life reputations. Hopefully this will hit that hunting sweet spot which Grand Prix 4 was always great at. Just be sure not to play chicken with Schuey at Australia's Flinders Corner.

to just have the accurate liveries and drivers, instead they want to make the best F1 game ever. Development is only currently at pre-alpha, but you know what? We have a sneaking suspicion that they might just pull it off. If you're a fan of Geoff Crammond, this is definitely worth your attention. ●



### HOW COMPLETE?

50%

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

95%

More than just four-wheeled fun. Expect to be impressed

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# Just Cause 2

*When one parachute just isn't enough...*

**Publisher:** Square-Enix

**Developer:**

Avalanche Studios

**Heritage:** Just Cause,  
The Hunter

**Link:** [www.justcause.com](http://www.justcause.com)  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
Dual Core CPU, 3Gb RAM,  
512Mb video card

Games *can* be art, but Just Cause 2 is the furthest away from that ideal as is physically possible, and you know what? That's what makes it so damn endearing. No concessions have been made to accommodate realism, leaving Rico free to grapple head-first into helicopters, survive falls from over 50 metres and, most importantly, blow up entire bases up without consequence or regret. Avalanche Studios have created a game not a political statement, and it's provided more fun than we ever expected.

Straight from the off you're granted the grapple ability and encouraged to shoot up buildings, attach unfortunate guards to walls and steal helicopters by zipping from the ground to the air.

Even on normal difficulty, players aren't unduly punished for dispatching enemies in a more imaginative way than a headshot. The gimmick even has practical, non-combative, uses – aircraft stuck in a ditch? Simply attach one hook to the plane by pressing the hook key, release when the reticle is over the vehicle and bingo, they're both attached, so you can now tow your stricken craft out of trouble and into the skies. It's very easy to use and much more so after you ditch the gamepad and go for mouse controls – you'll be attaching soldiers to gas canisters in practically no time at all.

Gameplay gimmicks come and go but Just Cause 2's grappling hook completely changes the way players

*"Avalanche Studios have created a game, not a political statement, and it's provided more fun than we ever expected"*



Quippy catchphrases aren't as you'd think.



You can close your mouth now...

## FREEZE FRAME

*Taking you through the game, one step at a time...*



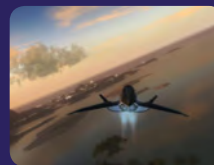
**30 MINUTES**

Rico has some trust issues, especially when it comes to foreigners.



**1 HOUR**

Swinging up mountains – what Bionic Commando should have been.



**4 HOURS**

"Fighter jet dispatched to you location". Now *that's* what we're talking about.



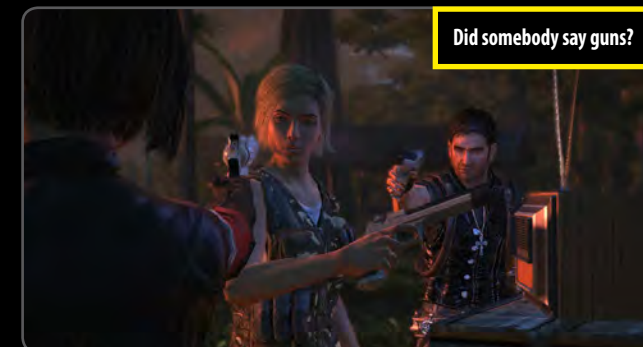
**8 HOURS**

Helicopter trouble? No problem. Rico's Grappling Hook has your back.



**20 HOURS**

Still can't find all those pesky part caches, let alone everything else.



Did somebody say guns?



Feel free to hang around.

### > Just Cause 2 continued

will approach a multitude of scenarios. Even the simple act of travelling from A to B has been given a new leash of life by Rico's grapple parachute combo, leaving you to reel yourself into your destination, gradually getting ever closely to that blimp on your HUD. Maybe it isn't as quick as a jet, but it's the style that the hook invokes which makes it so enjoyable.

The support ability from the original returns, conveniently providing weapons, vehicles and a handy transit service for when travel needs to be fast and without consequence. Weapons and vehicles can be modified, thanks to liberally spaced part caches which can

*"Weapons and vehicles can be modified, thanks to liberally spaced part caches"*



Rico's assumed crash position.

be found over the entire island. Think of this as Just Causes answer to GTA's hidden packages, but rather than being few and far between, they are everywhere. They may be an easy way to artificially lengthen the game's lifespan, but they do inspire exploration and give more resonance to the expansive world. The sheer amount of artefacts to collect and geography to explore will easily keep most players entertained beyond the 25 hour mark, with the more obsessive compulsive players going on long past that.

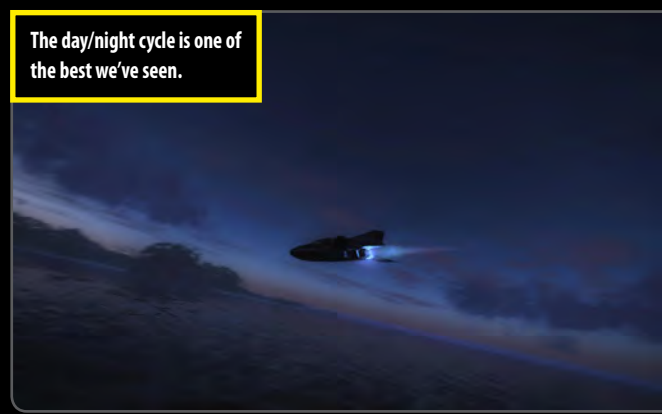
Unfortunately, the story itself isn't as well integrated, with repetitive cut-scenes which continually have



contacts hanging outside trucks or repairing vehicles, and at times the sense of deja vu is genuinely distracting. It's hard to listen to someone for two



Sane people would open a parachute right about now.



The day/night cycle is one of the best we've seen.

minutes when you're sure they haven't moved in a few days.

It's unclear whether Avalanche Studios knew the plot was hokum at the beginning or if they'd prefer for gamers to focus on the action, but these are some extremely forgettable characters. Only Rico and the despotic Baby Panay ➤



The label 'adrenaline junkie' doesn't quite cut it.

**> Just Cause 2 continued**  
really stand out, but at least CIA agent Tom Shelden makes an appearance. The

story is really just an excuse for players to feel vindicated for causing destruction on such a massive scale, but let's face it, we don't really need an excuse.

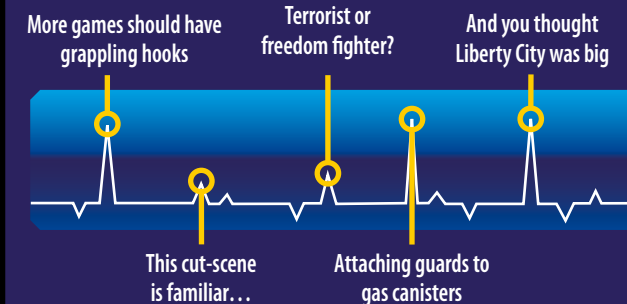
Pyromania aside, at its most basic level the open-world explode-'em-up offers cash for any destruction caused, utilising a similar model to what's found in Mercenaries 2. Faction and campaign missions are unlocked as enemy bases are laid to waste – indicated by helpful bars whenever you explode something painted with the red symbol of the Panau government. Every area's completion ratio is handily displayed in the corner, so players know how many targets are left to eviscerate. Every stat is tracked, including how many kilometres driven, how many bases destroyed, area travelled by parachute and how many enemies juggled. The sense of progression constantly wills you forward, so that even the briefest of play sessions yields positive results.

The stunning landscape of Panau Island is the real star of the show, which is even more beautiful when the game transitions between day and night.

[🖱️](#) **Roll over screen for annotations**



## PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



***"The stunning landscape of Panau Island is the real star of the show"***

Gamers will spot waterfalls, skyscrapers and what appears to be a giant airship. Its a rich environment offering plenty of notable sights.

Just Cause 2 makes no apologies for its balls-out head-first approach, which should win over even the most pretentious of gamers. The lack of any real story holds it back from true greatness but the purity of the gameplay and the ludicrous amounts of fun it'll provide will allow most gamers to forgive its few shortcomings. ●

## PCGZine Verdict

*As vindictive as it is enjoyable. A true digital playground*

- 👍 Grappling hook is always a giggle
- 👍 Hugely expansive game world
- 👎 Plot and characters lacks substance

**88%**



# Command & Conquer 4

## The legacy of Kane

Any changes to a prolific franchise reaching its fourth incarnation is brave, regardless of the results. The C&C franchise has gone through many evolutions over the years, and even though the latest is a mixed bag of refinements, improvements and backward steps, it still puts on an impressive display.

### Tell us a story

The plot takes place directly after the events of the third chapter, with the Scrin chased off into the furthest reaches of space, leaving NOD and GDI to battle it out once again. Lacking a

third faction isn't an issue however, because all of the units have been given a fresh lick of paint and impressive new abilities.

All of this is minor compared to the biggest change however, as MCVs are now more mobile and have the ability to deploy anywhere on the map at a moment's notice. The necessity for structures is now gone, as the factories of old have been absorbed by these behemoths, completely streamlining

the manufacturing process. Unit choice is governed by the type of MCV chosen – either Offence, Defence and Support. Each class is significantly different and it's this choice which is often the most important during play.

In both campaigns these choices seem needlessly restrictive, forcing you to walk down one road when previously you'd be able to experiment with several, but it's all to aid another pinnacle component: multiplayer. ➤



Keeping units close to the base allows them to regenerate health.

**Publisher:** EA  
**Developer:** EA LA  
**Heritage:** Boom Blox, Red Alert 3  
**Link:** [www.commandandconquer.com](http://www.commandandconquer.com)  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
 Dual core CPU, 1.5Gb RAM, 256Mb 3D card



As always, the boss units completely steal the show.

As always, the boss units completely steal the show.



## A CLASS OF ITS OWN

Taking a closer look at the different disciplines



Offence

Defence

Support

### Offence

This class is strictly for tank rushers and all-or-nothing sorts of gamers. Easily the most effective class in single-player, even the earliest units pack a wallop. Both GDI and NOD campaigns suit this discipline.



The zoom function is vastly improved, and allows an even closer eye on the action.

[👤](#) Roll over screen for annotations



## > C&C4 continued

From the moment you boot up you'll be taken into a general lobby that's populated by others who are playing the game. It breaks the intimidation barrier immediately, tempting you to team up on maps suitable for between four and 10 player battles. Working together is an absolute joy. When three players team up utilising each of the classes then they really are unstoppable, and suddenly each seemingly backward step in the design process makes sense. There's even a replay option to record your memorable battles.

## Are you experienced?

XP is earned both in the campaign and in online battles, unlocking new units and abilities by meeting objectives and destroying enemies. The progression makes each game worth playing, contributing to your Command & Conquer future and makes players think twice about quitting out.

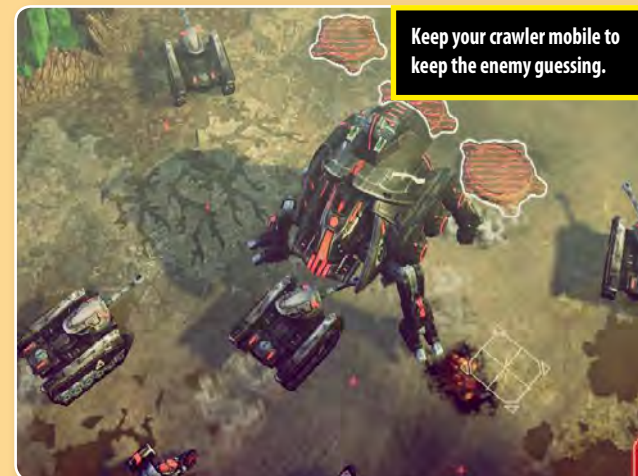
Both the GDI and NOD campaigns have their twists and turns, but despite being billed as the concluding chapter in the Tiberian story, it left us underwhelmed. The FMV's are as good as ever, but the story and mission design seems less varied and therefore slightly weaker as a result.

That said, the shortcomings of the campaign are more than made up for by the brilliant multiplayer which is sure to occupy servers for months to come. Command & Conquer has always been about online play, and this chapter expands on that success and extends it even further. ●

FMV returns in all its delightfully cheesy glory!



Keep your crawler mobile to keep the enemy guessing.



## PCGZine Verdict

*A triumphant step in the right direction, but not without its faults*

- 👍 New engine provides nice visuals
- 👍 Great multiplayer implementation
- 👎 Campaign is over too quickly

# 80%

# Prison Break: The Conspiracy

*"It's only natural that players can't be spotted going into prohibited areas"*

*Perhaps incarceration isn't as bad as people say*

Initially, playing a stealth game feels almost nostalgic – avoiding guards and disabling cameras and what not – a factor which is further accentuated by Prison Break: The Conspiracy being based on a long-finished TV show.

In reality, both the gameplay and source material complement each other very well. As undercover agent Tom Paxton, you are investigating Michael Scofield, a fellow inmate who's trying to set free his brother who's

awaiting execution. And the stealth genre suits the subject matter very well, as it's only natural that players won't want to be spotted going into any of the prison's prohibited areas or killing troublesome guards.

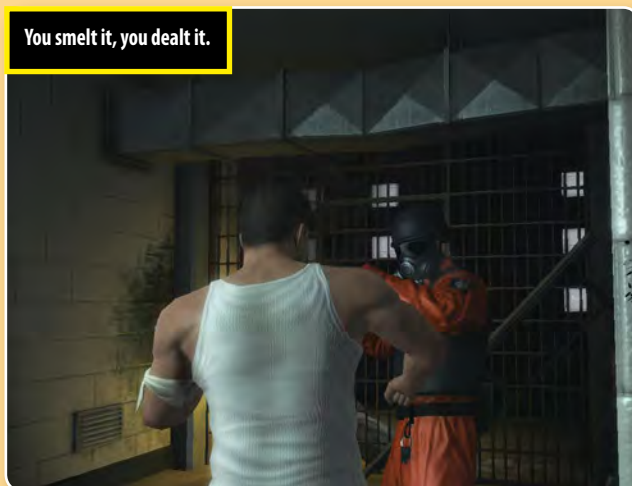
The plot's interesting and faithful to the series, with key characters mostly voiced by the same actors. Fox River Penitentiary is sufficiently tense and dominating, and the atmosphere while sneaking around ➤



**Publisher:** Deep Silver  
**Developer:** ZootFly  
**Heritage:** Panzer Elite Action  
**Link:** <http://prisonbreak.deepsilver.co.uk>  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
2.0GHz CPU, 1Gb RAM,  
Shader 3.0 video card

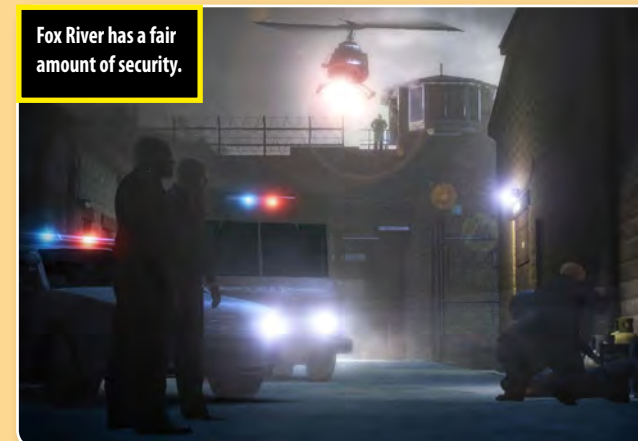
You smelt it, you dealt it.



'Cuddling the Punchbag' is a well-known prison activity.

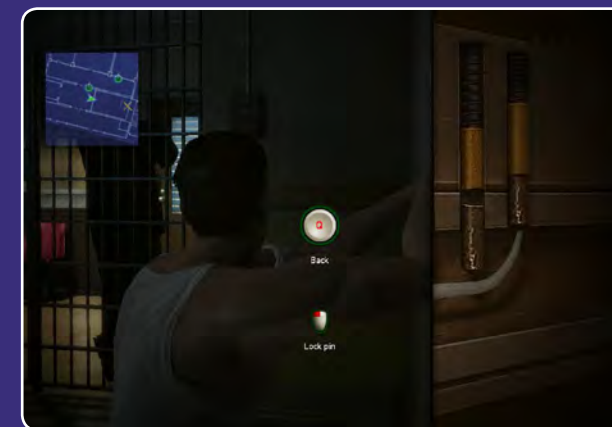


Fox River has a fair amount of security.



## MASTER OF STEALTH

*How to stay undetected in 'The Big house'*



**Utilise the lock pick**

**Vents are your friend**

**Stay in the shadows**

## Utilise the lock pick

As with any prison there are plenty of doors to unlock. Simply go along each of the four pins and click the left mouse button so it'll stay in place. Be careful though, as there's usually a guard looking around to bust any wrongdoing.



🖱️ **Roll over screen for annotations**



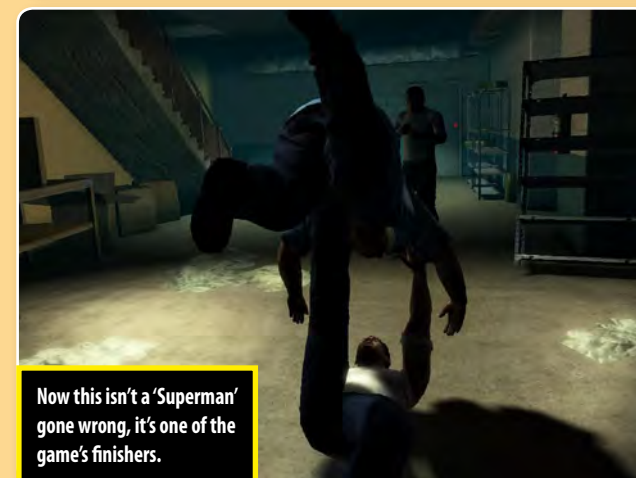
## ➤ **Prison Break** continued

its underbelly is immersive and addictive. When caught, the game takes you back to a previous recent checkpoint without any need for loading, making the experience relatively frustration free.

The story is very well paced too, culminating in a 10-hour experience which doesn't outstay its welcome. Quick-time events punctuate the finer cut-scenes, but they rarely take more than one or two attempts to successfully complete. Following prompts on a keyboard is very strange, but in this accessible title they make sense, no matter how contrived.

Fighting on the other hand is always on the agenda, and while it's fun at first, we began to wonder if there was anyone left who didn't want some fisticuffs. The block, jab, heavy punch system is fun but it lacks depth. Finishers are dramatic but needless – why can't I just punch a fellow inmate into submission? The complete lack of blood is also troubling, as Prison Break deals with racism and copious amounts of violence, so what's the problem showing a little blood? There's also a training dynamic where players get better at fighting the more they lift weights or punch a bag, but in the grand scheme it's only a distraction. There are other niggles as well, such as clipping and occasionally bonkers AI but they aren't that serious.

Prison Break isn't perfect but the story is strong, the characters are interesting and the gameplay enjoyable, culminating in a experience which should surpass expectations. ●



## PCGZine Verdict

*A respectful and thrilling emulation of the show, but lacking a bit of depth*

- 👍 The plot is top notch
- 👍 Great utilisation of source material
- 👎 Core gameplay gets repetitive

# 76%

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**Publisher:** Kalypso Media  
**Developer:** Realmforge Studios  
**Heritage:** N/A  
**Link:** [www.mudtv.com](http://www.mudtv.com)  
**OUT NOW**

**System Requirements:**  
 2.0GHz CPU, 1Gb RAM,  
 128Mb graphics card

# M.U.D TV

*For those that want more than a remote control*

**M**ad Ugly Dirty TV doesn't paint flattering picture of the small screen. This management sim is all about the power of pushing products, and if you end up making quality television along the way then that's just a bonus.

The quirky visuals are a great fit for the always-satirical action, featuring stars like Heidi Heart and Marilyn Monorail. It's delightfully silly but beneath the colourful exterior is a satisfyingly robust economy sim. Basic gameplay stems from keeping advertisers happy by showcasing their products during shows, for example sports cars to meatheads during an action flick or perfume to housewives

during soaps. There's eight different demographics in all, and keeping everyone satisfied while maintaining the ratings is a real challenge.

Competition channels are also vying for the talent, advertisers and audience. All the action takes place in the same building and you'll often see your competitors in the ground floor lobby chatting up advertisers and buying up shows.

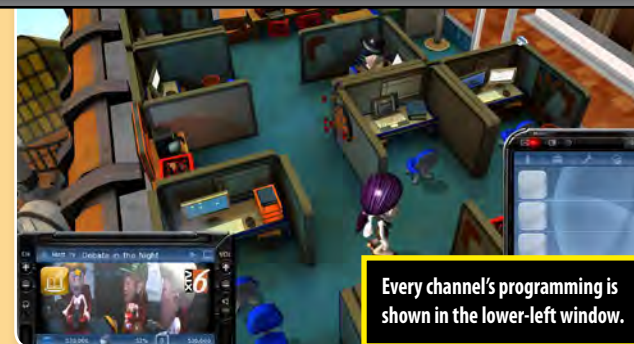
Studios, writing booths and production centres can also be built in order to make all-original productions but if you like, you can always rely on the ready-made shows on the ground floor, but usually the best stuff are the homegrown shows to be honest.

*"You'll often see your competitors in the ground floor lobby chatting up advertisers and buying up shows"*

There's a campaign involving a maniacal TV director, skirmish and an entertaining multiplayer mode to add some variety to the gameplay.

As everything is in one building, you'll be constantly shifting from the studio to the lobby, when realistically managing advertisers could be streamlined to a menu. That's really the main complaint regarding M.U.D TV: there are a lot of clicks needed to get even the simplest action done. It makes you feel more involved while you're inhabiting the world, but it feels out of touch with the rest of the genre.

M.U.D TV is bursting with humour and originality but unfortunately a few silly design choices let it down. ●



Every channel's programming is shown in the lower-left window.

## STAR IN YOUR OWN SHOW

*Don't let Realmforge have all the fun!*

As well as packing a quirky character editor, the more creative gamers out there can also have a go at making their own movies – or more accurately, modifying the existing 28 templates available in the game – ranging from quizzes to blockbusters. It's not Molyneux's The Movies but it's much easier and fun to use.



Ah quiz shows – minimal effort, maximum ratings.



Mr T in a Western? Just giving the people what they want.

**PCGZine  
Verdict**

*A solid strategy suitable for the economically minded*

- 👍 Brimming with satire
- 👍 A great original concept
- 👎 Prepare to do lots of mousework

**78%**



# Dragon Age: Awakening

*Giving BioWare fans exactly what they want*

**W**hen does an expansion become its own standalone game? Well, how about when you form a new plot, engineer better features and introduce varied characters for the first time. Dragon Age: Awakening ticks all these boxes yet BioWare haven't spun this out and still require ownership of Origins.

Gamers should be flattered really, as most companies would have turned this into a proper game and changed the meagre price tag to a much bigger one, but despite the many triumphs of this experience, there are a

few issues. Most of the memorable bunch from Origins don't return, but thankfully Oghren returns with his wanton alcoholism in tow, and he's flanked by four new buddies which aren't quite as entertaining as the original games, but the 20 hour campaign is still filled with intriguing choices which'll make it tough to look in the mirror after playing.

The Darkspawn are still trying to destroy the Grey Warden's Keep, leading questers to learn plenty of surprising facts about the plot's demonic bad guys. Players can either

*"Most companies would have turned this into a proper game, and changed the meagre price tag to a much bigger one"*

start a new character, or import your previous hero from Origins. Unfortunately, the decisions carried over aren't as numerous as in Mass Effect 2, but it's nice to feel some sort of continuation.

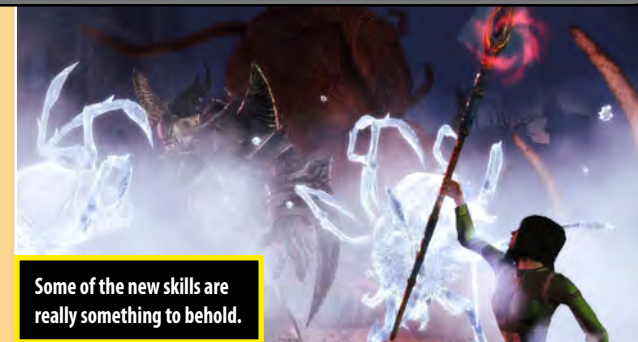
It's clear why Awakening hasn't been sent out into the retail wilderness on its own, as it is a great experience but it isn't as enjoyable as Origins. That said, it does hold some great improvements to the formula – such as crafting – and is a must buy for anyone who feels the urge to return to Ferelden. ●



Bosses will still make you pause for thought.



There's more to the Darkspawn than we all thought.



Some of the new skills are really something to behold.

## THE GHOST OF JUSTICE

*Say hello to Ferelden's most intense arrival*

The best new character for us was a warrior named Justice who, as his name suggests, has an insatiable passion for all things righteous. He may look a bit gaunt – in fact, he's pretty much a double for REM's Michael Stipe – but players would do well to heed his advice before making another difficult and slightly immoral choice.



PCGZine  
Verdict

*More of the same isn't always a bad thing, especially in this case*

- More mini-sequel than expansion
- Fantastically thrilling conclusion
- Characters aren't as strong as Origins

85%

WIN!

ANOTHER WORLD: 15TH  
ANNIVERSARY EDITION

We have 10 copies of the updated classic to giveaway thanks to the Good old Games guys!

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